



# South Coast Air Quality Management District



## Safety Tips for Seniors

As Southern Californians battle the wildfires, there are measures we all can take to protect our health from the harmful pollutants filling our air.

Seniors are more susceptible because they are more likely to have medical conditions such as chronic pulmonary disease, emphysema and bronchitis. High pollution levels can worsen their health conditions.

**Following are some tips seniors can follow to protect themselves from unhealthful air.**

- **Stay indoors.** Limit your exposure to unhealthful air quality conditions as much as possible. Keep your windows and doors closed. Use your air conditioning system and place it on recirculation mode, if available.
- **Reduce your activity.** Reducing your physical activity lowers the amount of polluted air your body intakes. Seniors with heart or lung disease should avoid prolonged or heavy exertion.
- **Consult your physician.** If you suffer from a heart or lung ailment, talk with your doctor. He or she can advise you on treatment or whether and when you should leave the area. Call your doctor immediately if your condition worsens. If you suffer with chronic diseases have an adequate supply of medications (5 days or more) available.
- **Keep informed.** Listen to your local news, weather forecasts and air quality alerts provided by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD). If the air quality in your area worsens take necessary precautions to protect you and your family's health.

While the ash and smoke are visible reminders of the pollution currently impacting our area, be even more cautious of the fine particles you can't see. These particles, which are invisible to the naked eye, bypass our natural defense system and lodge into our lungs. They can cause irritation, and over the long-term, cause decreased lung function. They also make us more susceptible to developing diseases such as asthma, bronchitis, emphysema and possibly cancer.

If you have any questions about air quality, please call AQMD at **1-800-CUT-SMOG**  
[www.aqmd.gov](http://www.aqmd.gov).

*Cleaning the air that we breathe...™*